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ABSTRACT

Prepared by the Outcomes Assessment Task Force (OATF) at Owens Community College (OCC), in Ohio, this document describes the philosophy guiding assessment at OCC and provides a non-prescriptive guide for implementing an assessment plan. Part I provides an introduction to outcomes assessment at OCC, including OCC's assessment philosophy, a list of OATF members, and a calendar of assessment events through summer 1996. This section also outlines the following steps in a procedural design for implementing the OATF's proposed assessment plan: (1) examine college mission; (2) examine division mission statements; (3) examine department/program mission and outcomes; (4) develop departmental assessment plans; (5) implement and test assessment measures; (6) use assessments to make improvements; (7) evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment measures; (8) evaluate the assessment plan itself; and (9) communicate results to constituents. Part II describes the theoretical orientation of the Task Force and provides examples of the nine steps of the OATF plan. Part III describes assessment methodologies at OCC, indicating that assessment is divided into institutional, general education (GE), and department assessments, and provides tables of institutional assessment functions and activities. This section also provides the nine expectations and indicators of effectiveness of the Ohio Board of Regents, a table of GE competencies, and a workbook for program specific assessments providing information on the functions of community colleges, writing department mission statements, and measuring results. Finally, part IV presents a model of institutional effectiveness. Lists of general education competencies and desired competencies for students are appended. (KP)

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DOCUMENTING STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT



**A PLAN FOR OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT
AT OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

ABOUT OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Owens Community College is a fully accredited, two year, state assisted institution of higher education that has served the higher education needs of Northwest Ohio for more than 25 years. There are nearly 10,000 students on two campuses attending Owens Community College. The Toledo Campus is four and a half miles from downtown Toledo, and the Findlay Campus is located at the corner of Cory and Davis Streets in Findlay.

Owens Community College has more than 50 technical program majors and the associate of arts and associate of science degrees. Students can pursue a two-year associate degree, a one-year certificate program, or a specialized training or retraining program through the Center of Development and Training.

**OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

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PART I.

Introduction



OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PHILOSOPHY

At Owens Community College, outcomes assessment is a process (using both subjective and objective evaluation) that will be used primarily to improve teaching and learning. Assessment methodology will help to shape the teaching process by providing information directly useful in forming decisions about teaching, decisions that will lead to optimal learning for students. This process will best be achieved by examining students in a variety of contexts to determine not only what our students are learning, but how they are learning.

As a post-secondary institution, Owens Community College clearly states its mission and purpose (see page 36-37). The documentation of student academic achievement will begin and end with these mission and purpose statements. As student learning outcomes are measured and assessment results are incorporated into the college planning process, refinement of the college's mission and purpose statements may occur.

The outcomes assessment process is integrated into an institutional effectiveness model that ensures the utilization of assessment results as one of the foundations upon which plans for improvement are made. Results from assessments will be compiled with other information relevant to the operation of both instructional and noninstructional departments. Assessment results will be linked to the operational and market planning processes designed to establish departmental goals and objectives. College budget and contingency-planning processes will help to match fiscal and human resources to college needs and plans.

Both the outcomes assessment process and the institutional effectiveness model include the systematic evaluation of each component of its process.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT TASK FORCE

During the 1992-1993 academic year, the Outcomes Assessment Task Force consisted of the following individuals:

Name	Area Represented
Dr. William Ivoska, Co-Chair.	Student Development
Shelby Pierce, Co-Chair.	General Education
Gerry Bazer.	Dean, Arts and Sciences
Daniel Clark.	Business Technologies
Mary Ann Frost.	Student Development, Findlay Campus
Dr. David Miller.	General Education
Julia Popp*.	Health Technologies
Randy Rubley.	Industrial Technologies
Linda Stacy.	Center for Development & Training
Dr. Paul Unger**.	Academic Affairs
David Wagner.	Engineering Technologies

During the 1992-1993 academic year, these individuals reviewed all available outcomes assessment literature and tried to apply the concepts to the uniqueness of Owens Technical College. This initial planning document was written from the efforts of individual task force members.

This paper is designed as a non-prescriptive guide for the college community concerning the development of assessment programs. It is an evolutionary document and it will continue to evolve as the assessment efforts mature.

*In Spring 1993, Julia Popp replaced Mary Jane Fulcher, who left Owens College after Fall Semester, 1992.

**Dr. Paul Unger, Vice President for Academic Affairs, served as an ex-officio member.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE OWENS COLLEGE COMMUNITY

While the Outcomes Assessment Task Force was primarily responsible to prepare the finished document, early versions of task force writings were shared with the campus community. Ideas were also shared and discussed in open forums. Listed below is a chronology of past and possibly future task force activity.

	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Approximate Dates</u>
1.	Formation of Outcomes Assessment Task Force	June, 1992
2.	Cecelia Lopez/North Central association, visits campus to meet with all full-time faculty and staff to explain Outcomes Assessment philosophy	August, 1992
3.	Development of conceptual framework and departmental workbook	October, 1992
4.	Campus meetings to discuss conceptual framework	November 1992
5.	Sharing of concept with Board of Trustees	December, 1992
6.	Sharing of concept with Cecelia Lopez, NCA	January, 1993
7.	Development of General Education Outcomes via campus forums	March, 1993
8.	Development of institutional level assessments	March , 1993
9.	Initial development of institutional effectiveness model	March, 1993
10.	Schedule implementation by instructional departments into three phases: 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96	May, 1993

- | | | |
|-----|---|------------------------|
| 11. | Advertisement for position for Institutional Researcher | June, 1993 |
| 12. | Development of campus-wide student tracking system | June, 1993 |
| 13. | Completion of final draft of Outcomes Assessment Plan | August, 1993 |
| 14. | Workshop for faculty and staff in phase one, implementation stage | August, 1993 |
| 15. | Implement Outcomes Assessment efforts for phase one programs | Fall 1993/ Spring 1994 |
| 16. | Expansion of Outcomes Assessment Task Force | September, 1993 |
| 17. | Conduct institutional student needs assessment | Fall 1993 |

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------------------|
| 18. | Initiate Outcomes Assessment newsletter for on-campus communication | Spring 1994 |
| 19. | Build budget for campus assessment activity | 1993-94 Academic Year |
| 20. | Phase in campus-wide institutional assessments | 1993 Academic Year |
| 21. | Evaluate plan and its implementation | Spring 1994 |
| 22. | Review assessment results from phase one technologies majors | Spring & Summer 1994 |
| 23. | Implement phase two technology majors | Fall 1994 |
| 24. | Review plan with North Central Visiting Team | Fall 1994 |

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------------------|
| 25. | Evaluate plan and its implementation | Spring 1995 |
| 26. | Review assessment results from phase two technology majors | Spring & Summer 1995 |
| 27. | Implement phase three technology majors | Fall 1995 |
| 28. | Evaluate plan and its effectiveness | Spring 1996 |
| 29. | Review assessment results from phase three technology majors | Spring & Summer 1996 |

HOW WILL THE PLAN BE ADMINISTERED?

The Outcomes Assessment Task Force recommended that departmental chairmen work with faculty to develop, implement and utilize their own departmental assessment plans. The task force did not recommend that an Assessment Co-ordinator position be created or that release time be granted for faculty, staff, or administrators to coordinate the assessment process. The design and use of assessment activity should be as close to the teaching/learning process as possible so that the goal of improved student academic achievement will occur. Departmental-specific assessment activities are the responsibilities of each particular academic department, except for the guidance and support that could be gained from the office of institutional research.

Summative assessment results must be communicated by the chairman to the academic deans and vice president, as well as to all other constituents deemed necessary by department members. An organized assessment plan should be submitted by each departmental chairman to his or her respective dean. However, it is the responsibility of both faculty and chairman to develop and implement the process of documenting student academic achievement.

"A PROCEDURAL DESIGN"

One of the broad characteristics of an Outcomes Assessment Program is that it must be tied to the Mission and Purposes of the College. North Central has indicated that "a program to assess students' academic achievement should . . . flow from the institution's mission" (Patton and Doherty 35). In keeping with this objective, the Outcomes Assessment Task Force believes that the program should begin and end with the Mission of the College.

To accomplish that goal, the College community is asked to evaluate and provide feedback for the following proposed plan (outlined in detail later):

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Year
1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Examine the College Mission and Purposes. Begin to determine how the Mission and each Purpose apply to student outcomes on the Division and the Department/Program levels.2. Examine Division mission and purpose statements that are congruent with the College Mission and Purposes. Division mission and purpose may be found in your operational plan.3. Examine Department/Program mission and outcomes statements. Insure that they are congruent with the Division mission and purpose statements.4. Develop a department assessment plan.
 A - Technical Majors outcome
 B - General Education outcome |
| Year
2 | <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Implement and test the assessment measures. Interpret the data, and communicate the results to the appropriate communities. |
| Year
3 | <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. Use the assessment results to make changes resulting in improvement, if so indicated.7. Create a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment measures.8. Create a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment plan itself.9. Communicate results to appropriate constituents. |

The three years indicated mean that each particular department is given 3 years to complete the assessment process. In year 1, instructional staff must complete steps 1 through 4. In year 2, data is collected, interpreted and communicated. Finally in year 3, A thorough evaluation of the assessment process (steps 6 through 9) is completed.

PART II.

Theoretical Orientation



OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**FORMAT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OUTCOMES
ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Definition of Outcomes Assessment

In July 1992, the Outcomes Assessment Task Force met to discuss the development and implementation of an Outcomes Assessment Plan at Owens Community College. In this meeting, a definition of outcomes assessment was presented. Simply stated, outcomes traditionally are the expectations of student academic achievement by the time students have completed their programs. From the academic perspective, then, outcomes are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that those in a position to evaluate students expect those students to have acquired during their careers at Owens. It is quite likely that most, if not all, programs have already established a set of expectations (outcomes).

Once the outcomes have been established, they must be assessed. Assessment involves any means of measuring the level of achievement of each exiting student—both at the point of exit and beyond (summative) as well as during student's career at Owens Community College (formative). Assessments may be formative, summative, or both, depending on their use. Assessments used to measure ongoing progress are considered formative (e.g. lab reports, essays, unit tests, small group discussions, student evaluations, etc.); those used to measure the level of achievement that students have acquired by the end of their college careers are considered summative (e.g. employer surveys, surveys of graduating students and alumni, percentages of degrees awarded, capstone courses, grade point averages, licensure exams, etc.).

Some assessments may be both formative and summative—a final exam in a course may be summative as the final measure of a student's level of achievement in a course. It may also be formative, however, when it is considered as one of many final exams that together with other assessments may be used to determine students' progress during their academic careers. Assessment, then, is not limited to a capstone course, for instance, or a normed test. It occurs throughout a student's college experience. With this ongoing information, appropriate changes can be made and measures can be taken which should result in the continual improvement of college programs.

The Plan Flows From the Mission

Why Move From College Mission to Division Mission?

One question that arose in the Task Force meetings was "Why should the academic community move from the College Mission statement to the development of a Division mission statement?" The concern was that the diversity of the departments could make it difficult to recognize the commonalities that exist within the entire Division. In short, members of each Department/Program know what their expectations for their students are, but may not know what the Division outcomes are. Would it be easier to formulate Department/Program outcomes first and then to fit those together into a Division Mission statement?

As the discussion progressed, however, it became evident that the Division Mission statement must be formulated before the Departments/Programs establish their missions and outcomes. North Central clearly indicates that the outcomes program must flow from the institution's mission (Patton and Doherty 35.) Since the Owens Community College Mission and Purpose Statements provide the foundation and the rationale for decisions made at the College by members of the College community, it is essential that the Division mission statement be congruent with the College Mission and Purposes. Likewise, the Department/Program mission and outcomes statements must be congruent with the Division mission and purpose statements. To ensure this congruence, members of the Divisions must first meet, articulate their commonalities and create a Division mission statement and outcomes statements so that they can then meet on the Department/Program level to identify and/or develop their individual missions and student outcomes. Those individual outcomes need to flow from (be congruent with) the Division mission statement. Once the individual outcomes have been articulated, department members should be able to see how their outcomes reflect the Division mission which in turn reflects the College Mission and Purposes. In short, to help ensure congruence on all levels, it is necessary to move from the abstract and general to the concrete and specific, and then back again. One Task Force member summarized the concept effectively when he said, "The outcomes program begins and ends with the College Mission and Purposes."

The proposed outline was written with two goals in mind: to establish parameters and to provide the academic community with guidelines. To that end, the Task Force recommends that the Divisions work from College Mission and Purposes to Division mission and outcomes statements to Department/Program mission and outcomes statements.

A second dimension in the proposed plan is the list of fundamental questions. These questions were designed to assist the Divisions and Departments/Programs with the development of mission and outcomes statements. The Task Force members believe that these questions will provide a framework, and that the answers will assist in the formulation of mission and outcomes statements and in the identification of assessment plans and evaluation procedures.

Developing the Division Mission Statement

Traditionally, community college (and by extension, technical college mission statements) consist of five key functions: transfer, career preparation, basic skills and developmental education, continuing education, and access (Locak 4-5).

The Owens Community College Mission and Purpose Statements do indeed consist of those five key areas. Since those five functions can be readily identified in the College Mission and Purpose statements, the Outcomes Assessment Task Force believes that the process of constructing Division and Department/Program missions and outcomes will be facilitated if the members of the academic community can incorporate each of these five functions into their own Division and Department/Program mission statements. Thus, a workbook listing questions designed to assist faculty and administration in isolating the five key functions has been developed.

Another reason the Task Force believes that the division of the Mission statement into five key areas will be helpful is that this division will facilitate the evaluation process. Rather than attempting to show how the Division Missions and later, the assessment plan, flow from the College Mission and the nine Purposes, the Divisions, Departments and Programs can focus on the five key functions.

Finally, the identification of the five key functions serves to emphasize the congruence among the College Mission and Purposes, the Division missions, and the Department/Program missions, outcomes, and assessment measures. All parts of the plan should attempt to be congruent with the five common functions identified above.

Conclusions about Outcomes Assessment

During the course of this meeting, and in later meetings, task force members arrived at several conclusions concerning the nature of outcomes assessment:

- Outcomes assessment is important to the health of the institution. It enables faculty, administration, staff, and the Board of Trustees to assess the effectiveness of College programs and to make changes that will result in program improvement, a step toward fulfillment of the College Mission.
- Outcomes assessment can be seen as a benefit to the College community. If outcomes are indeed congruent with the Mission of the College, and if the assessments are valid and reliable, the College community will have the hard data it needs to make important changes—or to maintain the status quo.
- Faculty, administration, staff, the Board of Trustees, indeed, the entire College community must champion the concept of outcomes assessment. For any outcomes assessment plan to be successful, all levels must feel ownership of that plan.

Though outcomes and the assessment of those outcomes are not new concepts, the idea of an administered plan of outcomes assessment is a fairly recent development. North Central Association is evaluating institutional ability to fulfill the outcomes assessment component of Criterion Three ("The institution is accomplishing its purposes") beginning 1992, and in all succeeding visitations, institutions will need to demonstrate that they have an administered outcomes assessment plan, to show that the plan upon implementation is an outcomes assessment program, and to show that the program results in institutional improvement.

The Outcomes Assessment Task Force members recognized the need to communicate information about the outcomes assessment to the rest of the College community. They also recognized that a format for developing this administered plan would need to be provided so that staff, faculty, administration, and the Board of Trustees would have clear guidelines to follow. As a result, the Task Force developed a preliminary format for the creation of an Outcomes Assessment Program. The Task Force members would like the faculty and administration to review this proposed plan and, in scheduled Division meetings, to provide feedback about the appropriateness and the feasibility of the proposal.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE PROCEDURAL DESIGN

Below is an example of how the proposed plan could be implemented. Since the writer of this paper is a member of the Communications/Humanities Department, that department and the Arts and Sciences Division will be used primarily in this example. Steps one and two listed below, were completed during the operational planning portion of the Institutional Effectiveness Process. The department mission and purpose statements were also created in the operational planning process. Student outcome statements were not completed until the assessment process began.

1. Examine the College Mission and Purposes. The members of the Arts and Sciences Division would refamiliarize themselves with the College Mission and Purpose Statements. They would think about how the Arts and Sciences Division participates in each of the five key missions. These ideas could be developed individually and collected, solicited at Department or small group levels, or generated in a Division meeting.

2. Examine Division mission and outcomes statements. Using the above responses, the Arts and Sciences Division should next be able to create mission statements.

The statement should be checked to make certain that it is congruent with the College Mission and Purposes (i.e. with the five key functions). It should be noted that excessive time should not be spent creating this mission statement; a division should be able to articulate a mission statement in two to three hours in an overall Division meeting.

If appropriate, the Divisions should create outcomes that are specific to the Division. Those outcomes apply to all departments within a Division. It would thus be expected that all health students would develop an appropriate bedside manner and that some of the techniques they would be learning would be somewhat different from the techniques an auto body student would be learning in relating to customers and suppliers.

3. Create Department/Program mission and outcomes statements. With the newly created Division statement in hand, the Communications/Humanities Department now could create a department mission and outcomes statements. At this stage, much dialogue must occur. The mission statement will need to address any of the applicable five key functions, and the outcomes statements will need to be congruent with that mission statement and with the Division outcomes. During this process, the department may discover that it needs not only an overall department mission and outcomes statements, but also individual program mission and outcomes statements (e.g. the writing program, the speech program, the literature program, the history program, etc.). In addition, the department may recognize opportunities for interdepartmental dialogue (e.g. the progression between the developmental and the C/H Departments' writing programs or the expectations the Electrical Engineering Technology faculty have of students who have completed a composition sequence). As can be seen, communication within and between departments and divisions is essential at this stage.

Department members will need to be aware that appropriate outcomes—cognitive, affective, and psychomotor—will need to be identified. For instance, a cognitive outcome for Communications/Humanities students may be that they will demonstrate an ability to write clear, effective prose. An affective outcome may be that students will believe that their writing skills have improved upon completion of their composition sequence. Communications/Humanities department members may decide that psychomotor skills are not appropriately measured in their department. However, the Nursing Department may decide that those are very important for students in their department. Thus, the Nursing Department could state that student nurses must demonstrate sufficient manual dexterity to perform their duties with a minimal amount of discomfort to the patient.

4. Develop a department assessment plan. Once the Department/Program mission statement, outcomes statements, and activities have been articulated, the department must determine the assessment measures currently in place. For instance, two measures that the Communications/Humanities Department use are course grades (quantitative measures) and student evaluations (qualitative measures) to assess student academic achievement. Formative assessments consist of tests, quizzes, essays, journals, in-class writing assignments, student participation and attendance, presentations, laboratory performance, etc. Once the assessments have been identified, they need to be evaluated for validity and reliability. For instance, one concern about course grades may be the level of subjectivity involved. If 45 percent of the students in composition classes receive A's and B's, is it because they did A and B work, or was some other factor, such as grade inflation, at work? To address that issue, the Department members may decide to add assessments that would quantify the grades (for instance, portfolios graded by more than one instructor, or pretest/post-test results graded by more than one instructor). They may decide to create a set of evaluation criteria that would more closely quantify the meaning of each grade. Questionnaires could be sent to other faculty in other Divisions or to employers to determine their level of satisfaction with students' writing ability. As Departments are determining the assessment measures that could be incorporated into their programs, dialogue would focus on what is currently done, what the perceived effectiveness of the current measures is, and whether any other measure should be added. The Department/Program should also be aware that one of NCA's suggested characteristics is that multiple assessment measures be used.

As these assessments are being identified and developed, department members need to incorporate two elements: the dimensions to be assessed and the stage at which the assessment is to be administered.

Assessment Dimensions. Since cognitive and affective (and in some departments, psychomotor) outcomes will have been identified, the departments must be sure to identify or add assessments that measure those dimensions. For instance, in the Communications/Humanities Department, the cognitive outcome that students will demonstrate is an ability to write clear effective prose, which may be assessed by means of course grades, portfolio grades, faculty and employer surveys, etc. The affective outcome that students will believe that their writing skills have improved upon completion of the composition program can be measured through student surveys.

The Nursing Department's psychomotor outcome that students will demonstrate sufficient manual dexterity to perform their duties with a minimal amount of discomfort to their patients could be measured through patient satisfaction surveys and clinical instructors' evaluations. Appropriate (and multiple) assessments need to be identified for the stated outcomes.

Stages of Assessments. Departments also need to identify at which stage in the students' academic progress the assessments are to be administered: upon students' entry into college, formatively as the students progress through their academic careers, or summatively, when students complete their academic careers. For instance, a college-wide entry assessment is the ASSET Test. In the Communications/Humanities Department composition sequence, an entry assessment is the writing sample that all students are asked to produce.

Formative assessments in the Communications/Humanities Department are students' essays, paragraphs, journals, reports, etc. Summative assessments are students' writing program grade point averages and surveys administered to students upon their completion of the writing program, etc. Some departments have summative assessments already in place. The Nursing Department, for instance, has NLN scores and employer survey responses from which to draw data.

5. Implement and test the assessment measures. Though many assessment measures will already be in place, they will need to be reviewed for validity and reliability. According to Alexander Astin, Director of the Higher Education Research Institute of the University of California—Los Angeles, "an assessment instrument is valid to the extent that it measures what it purports to measure" (39). The instrument can be validated to the extent that through "logical analysis and argument," its relevance to the conceptual outcome can be demonstrated (Astin, 39). Reliability refers to the "amount of measurement error" an assessment contains (Astin 137). As outcomes assessments are applied to large numbers of students over time, their reliability becomes "paramount only in the face of generally negative findings, that is, when no environmental variable is found to make much of a difference in outcome performance" (Astin 137). In short, though it would be important to perform or to have available statistical validations of key outcomes assessments, not all outcomes measures need be, should be, or can be statistically validated.

Some questions that Departments/Division can ask about current and proposed outcomes measures are listed below:

- ☒ Do the assessments measure what we want them to measure, and are they measuring the appropriate population?
- ☒ Do the results tell us what we need to know about student academic achievement?
- ☒ Are those results truly reflective of a student's actual achievement?
- ☒ Would they be more accurately reflective of that achievement if affirmed by more than one instructor? If quantified by a clear set of evaluation criteria?
- ☒ Are they consistent indicators over time?

A final consideration is that faculty may wish to know about how particular students respond to the assessments. An assessment that accurately measures one student's level of academic achievement may not accurately measure another student's level of achievement. Again, multiple measures and ongoing faculty evaluation of those measures is crucial in order that the most accurate results possible are obtained.

Once the results of the assessments have been gathered, analyzed, and interpreted, they will need to be communicated to the appropriate individuals. For example, had this plan been in place five years ago, the Communications/Humanities Department may have discovered through its surveys that Composition II (ENG112) was not transferring to some local colleges and universities.

Follow-up research would have indicated that the reason for this situation was that the department did not require students to do a research paper in ENG112. In this case, the results needed to be communicated to those constituents responsible for making curriculum decisions. Other results interpreted by a department, such as data that supports new building construction or the generation of a fund-raising campaign, may need to be communicated across campus throughout the administrative levels, to the Board of Trustees, advisory task forces, and the external community served by the College. The departments will determine who should receive the results and to what end.

6. Use the assessment results to make changes resulting in improvement, if so indicated. One of NCA's requirements for an assessment plan is that it be used to facilitate institutional improvement. Thus, a department/program should analyze the assessment results in view of how the level of student academic achievement can be raised, and in terms of how well the Department/Program is fulfilling the five key functions. To accomplish this, a problem/solution process should be employed. Based on the assessment results, is there a need for change? Why or why not? Is there a problem? What is causing this problem? Can these causes be alleviated? What can be done to solve the problem or to improve the course/program? Is the proposed solution feasible? Are there other options or combinations of options? Are they feasible? Which is most feasible?

Dr. Paul Unger has suggested an analogy that may clarify this process. Student evaluations are assessments. How do faculty use the results of the student evaluations? Are there not times that a faculty member may make changes in course organization, teaching methods, or types of assignments given based on student evaluations? And if the instructor notices students commenting positively on certain facets of the course or his/her teaching, are not those facets likely to be included in the course the next time the instructor teaches it?

The improvements that faculty and administration elect to undertake must also be considered in terms of intervention techniques. Faculty and administration should consider the diverse college student population as they design their interventions. Such factors as teaching styles and methods, the age of the particular populations, the learning styles of populations, etc., need to be considered. Thus, as the assessments need to be multiple, so too may the interventions resulting in improvement.

It should be noted that not all improvements will involve fiscal resources. Many program improvements will be curriculum changes, course content changes, improvements in communication, etc. The improvements may be as simple as changing content organization in a course, changing a textbook, trying new teaching methods, or enhancing current successful methods. They may be more involved: a major curriculum change, new equipment, a course addition or deletion. In any case, the need for these improvements, with the implementation of the outcomes assessment program, will be supported by hard data, and therefore will be more appropriately justified.

The improvements will then need to be communicated to the appropriate constituents, and these improvements, too, will need to be evaluated. A suggested process for initiating improvement based on interpretations of assessment results, provided in Step Five in the workbook, is summarized below.

The department first summarizes the assessment results, then draws valid conclusions from that data, and finally makes recommendations that will improve the students' level of academic achievement. Returning to the Communications/Humanities Department example mentioned above, had this proposed plan been in place, the Communications/Humanities faculty would have concluded that students' inability to transfer ENG112 to four-year institutions was detrimental to the teaching/learning process because transferring students would need to retake Composition II at those baccalaureate institutions. In addition, students who were assigned research papers in other classes would be inadequately prepared. The recommendation would thus have been that the curriculum needed to be changed; a research paper needed to be incorporated into ENG112. Though this decision was actually made without the assessment plan in place, the Communications/Humanities Department probably would have become aware that there was a transfer problem much earlier than it actually did had the assessment plan been in existence. The transfer situation could have been enhanced sooner than it actually was.

Some of the improvements can be made simply through the academic channels. However, other improvements may involve many constituents, and even those "simple" improvements may need to be communicated. Thus, the plan needs to be an integrated part of a mechanism by which the results and recommendations are linked to planning and budgeting.

In response to this challenge, the Institutional Effectiveness model was developed. This process, (described in Part IV), integrates the outcomes assessment program with the College Mission and Purpose; strategic planning; program and department review and evaluation; operational planning; market planning; and budget development. With the integration of these elements, the recommendations from the outcomes assessment process can be implemented, resulting in institutional improvement.

7. Create a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment measures. For assessment to be effective, assessment measures must be valid and reliable. It must be determined that the assessments meet the needs of the Department/Program—that they are not outdated and that they are measuring the appropriate areas of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Thus, periodically, the assessments will need to be evaluated. The Divisions and/or the Departments/Programs will need to define how this evaluation will occur on a systematic basis, for example, every three years. A plan for this evaluation process will also need to be developed.

This evaluation process is incorporated into the Institutional Effectiveness model within the Academic Program Evaluation and Review process, as shown in Part IV.

8. Create a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the assessment plan itself. Like the individual assessment measures, the assessment plan that the College eventually adopts will need to be evaluated as well on a systematic basis. Input from the academic Divisions will be solicited concerning how to accomplish this evaluation. Again, like everything else that is being evaluated, this evaluation of the plan should lead to improvements in the plan.

9. Communicate results to appropriate constituents. Though communication has been specifically mentioned in several of the above areas, it deserves separate notice as well.

Each Department/Program and Division (with assistance from the Institutional Research Department) will be responsible for interpreting the data and deciding what to communicate when and to whom—keeping in mind that for institutional improvement to occur and to be documented, results must be communicated in a format that is understandable to appropriate constituents. These communication questions should be considered at each stage of the assessment plan since for any plan to be successful, it must be institution-wide.

Departments and Divisions, faculty, administration, and staff will be able to interact, to share ideas and approaches, to make suggestions and provide possible solutions. With a successful team approach, a successful outcomes assessment program can be developed and implemented, and improvements can result.

In addition to the individual College entities determining to whom the outcomes assessment information should be communicated, the College must create an overall communication design that includes a clear feedback loop.

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PART III.

**Assessment Methodologies at
Owens Community College**



ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES AT OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A. INTRODUCTION

Assessment will be divided into three major components for organizational purposes: institutional, department specific, and general education assessments.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Institutional assessments measure the degree to which the college fulfills its mission as it is stated in the college catalog and conveyed to students through various publications. Assessed are each of the five major components traditionally found in the community college, including transfer, career preparation, basic skills and developmental education, continuing education and community service, and access. In addition, the nine service expectations required by the Ohio Board of Regents are also a part of the institutional level assessments.

GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENTS

A general education assessment plan seeks to measure how well our students master the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that the entire college community has deemed important for all students, regardless of major. Campus-wide discussion led to the development of a "common core" of student skills that we at Owens Community College feel are essential for our graduates.

DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENTS

Departmental specific assessments are those chosen by the faculty and administration of each department in the college. Assessments are encouraged to include the measurement of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Departments should also learn about important student characteristics upon entry to their department, at various phases of completion (formative evaluation), and at (or nearly upon) completion of all requirements for graduation. Multiple sources of data should be considered in order to gain the most comprehensive understanding of student achievement, and this data is used for departmental improvements, accountability, and goal setting.

This workbook is available to assist departments with planning their assessment activity. Completion of this workbook, per se, is not a requirement of college administration as the workbook is not "turned in" or submitted to any particular office. The workbook is provided only to ensure that all required and recommended steps are considered by department staff when they develop and implement their outcomes assessment plan. Departments may choose to ignore the workbook and follow a format of their own creation, or a format suggested by their professional association, accrediting body, or by in-house faculty and staff. Administration only requires that an assessment plan be developed within a department from discussion by all (or most) departmental faculty and administration, that the institutional timelines be followed, and that the plan be used as it was intended (for the improvement of student learning).

The three major components of the assessment plan at Owens Community College were developed by an interdisciplinary assessment task force comprised of faculty and administrators from business, general education, engineering, health, and industrial technologies, Student Development, and the Center for Development and Training.

The task force members solicited input from the campus community via papers and memorandums sent to the campus community, campus-wide meetings held throughout the 1992-1993 academic year, and through their own ideas as their personal feelings reflect the departments or divisions.

The following assessment activities are part of the overall campus assessment plan. And, the activities and those responsible to complete the activities (as of Fall Semester 1993) are suggested plans and not definitive requirements. The assessment plan that is prepared should be reviewed by faculty, administration, staff, and board members at Owens Community College. Changes to the plan may, and probably will, still occur. Any good plan that expects to survive as the campus changes around it will need to be flexible and change with the campus. For example, as Owens Community College moves toward community college status, the mission and purpose of our institution will change and so, too, will the assessment plan.

B. INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENTS

The institutional-level assessments indicate the degree to which the college is meeting the fundamental requirements of its mission as it relates to student achievement. The institutional assessments are subdivided into five categories that help to organize the various components of college mission. The mission component, the questions we feel are important per component, and the indicators of achievement are described in Table 1.

In Table 2 we have detailed when each assessment should occur, by whom, to what type of population, who will provide data analysis, and to whom will the results be communicated. Trend data will obviously become available over time, and trend data will accompany annual reports.

During the 1992-1993 academic year, the Ohio Board of Regents formed a task force to investigate the measurement of the nine service standards for state two-year colleges in Ohio. In August, 1993, the task force finalized indicators for each service standard along with questions that colleges may use to assess their level of accomplishment of each service standard. The Regents' state assessment design was considered by the Owens Community College assessment subtask force for inclusion into our institutional assessment design. The service standards are evaluated by college personnel every two years beginning Spring Semester, 1994. Dr. William Ivoska served on the state service standards task force.

TABLE 1
INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENTS

FUNCTION	QUESTIONS	SOURCE OF DATA
1. Transfer Baccalaureate	What percentage of Owens graduates who attend a four-year college/university receive their Baccalaureate Degrees?	Percentage of completions.
	What percentage of Owens students transfer to colleges/universities?	Comparison of grades of Owens A.A./A.S./transfer module students attending four-year schools with grades of four-year native students.
	How do Owens students perform at four-year colleges and universities in comparison to those colleges' native students?	Input from A.A./A.S. advisory task forces.
	Does Owens' curriculum reflect the first two years of a Baccalaureate program?	Outcomes assessment results.
2. Career Preparation	How many students graduate with A.A.S./A.A.B./A.T.S.?	Placement rate.
	How many Owens graduates get jobs?	Employer satisfaction survey.
	How many Owens graduates get jobs in their chosen fields?	Advisory Task force input.
	Are employers of Owens graduates happy with the graduates' job performance?	Outcomes assessment results.
	Does the curriculum reflect current technology and scholarship?	

FUNCTION	QUESTIONS	SOURCE OF DATA
3. Basic Skills Developmental Education	Are students successful in subsequent related classes?	Passing rates.
4. Continuing Education and Community Service	Does Owens meet community served through credit and non-credit development?	Number of employers needs of economic offerings.
	Is Owens College enhancing the economic development of the community?	Advisory Task force input. Employer surveys.
5. Access	Does Owens College meet student needs, facilitating their completion of their degree programs?	Number and types of academic and non-academic support service.
	Does Owens College facilitate student entrance into the college and its programs of study?	Breadth and depth of course delivery and offerings. Review of product, price, place, promotion, and distribution.
6. The nine OBOR Service Expectations	A variety of questions are asked. The standards are listed in this booklet	A variety of data sources are used. Too numerous to record here.

TABLE 2
INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Assessment Activity	Population	Timeline	Who Administers	Who Provides Analysis	Who Receives Results
Articulation Agreements with Secondary Schools	Students who articulate credits from High School	Annually	Registrar	Registrar Exec. Director of Student Development Deans Council	Secondary Schools Prospective Students Deans & Faculty
ASSET	All new Degree/Cert. Seeking Students	Almost Daily	Assessment/ New Student Advising Staff	Institutional Researcher	New Students Faculty Administration
Student Satisfaction Survey	Sample of Students	Annually	Institutional Researcher	Institutional Researcher	Faculty Adm. Board of Trustees Advisory Task forces
Assessment of Program Outcomes (All Majors)	Program Specific Students	Timetable set by Dept. Chairman	Dept. Chairman and Faculty	Dept. Chairman and Faculty	Faculty Adm. Advisory Task forces Students
Student Tracking	All Students	Ongoing	Institutional Researcher	Institutional Researcher	Faculty Adm. System Board of Trustees Students
CAAP Test	Sample of Potential Owens Graduates	Annually	Institutional Researcher and Faculty	Institutional Researcher & General Ed. Dean/Chairmen	Faculty Adm. Advisory Task forces

Assessment Activity	Population	Timeline	Who Administers	Who Provides Analysis	Who Receives Results
Transfer Success Rate	Assoc. Degree Graduates who transfer to four-year Institutions	Annually	Institutional Researcher	Institutional Researcher	Faculty Adm. Prospective Students
Employer Satisfaction Survey	Sample of Employers who supervise OTC Graduates	Annually	Dept. of Job Placement	Institutional Researcher	Faculty Adm. Board of Trustees
Job Placement Rate	All Current Graduates	Annually: 5 months following Graduation	Dept. of Job Placement	Institutional Researcher	Faculty Adm. Board of Trustees Students External Constituents
9 service expectations	Varies per expectation	Every 2 years	Institutional Researcher	Institutional Researcher	Faculty Adm. Board of Trustees Students

THE NINE SERVICE STANDARDS OF THE OHIO BOARD OF REGENTS

EXPECTATION NO. 1

A range of career/ technical programming preparing individuals for employment in a specific career at the technical or paraprofessional level.

INDICATORS

A. Technical degree and certificate programs offered in response to community/ service area priorities.

1. How has the range of technical degree and certificate programs changed over the past reporting period?
2. What has been the trend in enrollment over the past reporting period?
3. What process are you using to determine if technical degree and certificate programs are meeting community/ service area priorities?

B. Placement.

1. What is the trend in job placements for degree and certificate programs?
2. What process or procedures are in place to evaluate and improve your job placement rate?

C. Degree Completion.

1. What is the trend in completion rates for students in your degree programs?
2. What is the trend in completion rates for students in your certificate programs?
3. What process or procedures are you using to evaluate and improve retention and completion rates?

EXPECTATION NO. 2

Commitment to an effective array of developmental education services providing opportunities for academic skill enhancement.

INDICATORS

- A. Developmental courses, at a minimum in reading, language skills, and mathematics, that meet students' academic needs.
 - 1. What developmental courses in reading, language skills and mathematics are offered?
 - 2. How do you measure and demonstrate the effectiveness of developmental courses on student performance in subsequent coursework?
- B. Testing to determine the need for and appropriate placement in developmental courses.
 - 1. What placement testing is done?
 - 2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these developmental services?
- C. Developmental services, at a minimum in tutoring and study skills, that meet students' academic needs.
 - 1. What tutoring and study skill services are offered?
 - 2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of these developmental services?

EXPECTATION NO. 3

Partnerships with industry, business, government and labor for the education and training of the workforce to enhance the economic development of the community.

INDICATOR

- A. Workforce educational and training initiatives developed in cooperation with industry, business, government and labor.

1. What workforce educational and training initiatives currently exist with industry, business, government and labor?
2. How is the economic development impact of these workforce initiatives evaluated?

EXPECTATION NO. 4

Non-credit continuing education and cultural enrichment opportunities.

INDICATORS

A. Non-credit professional development and personal enrichment courses offered to satisfy community/ service area needs and interests.

1. What is the number, type and frequency of courses offered?
2. What is the extent of community/ service area participation in the planning of non-credit CED course offerings?
3. How do you evaluate the quality and effectiveness of professional development and personal enrichment courses?

B. Programs for cultural enrichment offered to satisfy community/ service area needs and interests.

1. What is the number, type and frequency of cultural enrichment programs offered?
2. How do you evaluate the effectiveness of cultural enrichment programs in meeting community/ service area needs?

EXPECTATION NO. 5

College transfer programs or the first two years of a baccalaureate degree for students planning to transfer to four year institutions.

INDICATORS

- A. Associate of Arts, Science and Individualized Study degree programs reflecting community/ service area priorities.
 - 1. How do you assess whether your associate degree programs are responsive to community/ service area priorities?
- B. Programs and courses leading to bachelor's degrees reflecting community/ service area priorities.
 - 1. How do you assess whether your associate degree programs are responsive to community/ service area priorities?
- C. Arrangements among campuses which facilitate completion of bachelor's degrees through transfer or relocation.
 - 1. What process is in place to facilitate the transfer or relocation of students to bachelor degree programs?
- D. Appropriate preparation of students for transfer or relocation.
 - 1. By what process do you assess the preparation of your students for transfer or relocation?
 - 2. How do you assess your transfer and relocation process in terms of student outcomes?

EXPECTATION NO. 6

Linkages with high schools to ensure that graduates are adequately prepared for higher education. These linkages should include a student oriented focus and marketing strategies to ensure that high school students are aware of their educational opportunities within the community/service area.

INDICATORS

- A. Formal and/or informal linkages between high schools, two-year colleges and regional campuses to improve academic readiness to do college level work.
 - 1. What formal and/or informal programs or arrangements exist with local high schools to improve academic readiness?
 - 2. How do you assess the impact and outcomes of those arrangements?
 - 3. What feedback do you provide to the local high schools on the effectiveness of those arrangements?
- B. Programs on the importance of higher education, the educational opportunities available at two-year colleges and regional campuses and the means of achieving admission and acquiring financial aid.
 - 1. What programs/ workshops/ seminars are offered to potential students, parents and community groups?
 - 2. How do you measure and assess the outcomes of the programs you offer on educational opportunities and the means of achieving admission and acquiring financial aid?

EXPECTATION NO. 7

Student access provided according to a convenient schedule and program quality provided at an affordable price.

INDICATORS

- A. Process for program evaluation and quality improvement.
 - 1. How do you evaluate the quality of your associate degree and certificate programs?
 - 2. How do you evaluate the quality of your programs leading to a bachelor's degree?

3. What process is followed or what type of actions are taken when program quality is found to be in need of improvement?

B. Courses offered at times reflecting community/ service area priorities.

1. What is the distribution of course offerings over the hours and days of a week for Autumn quarter/ semester?
2. What is the process by which you judge the appropriateness of the days and times at which courses are offered?

C. Access through reasonable fees and financial aid.

1. What are the average student cost/ credit hour and cost/ FTE, including all fees, per semester/ quarter?
2. What is the average annual amount of financial aid per student FTE?
3. What percentage of your students are receiving financial aid?

EXPECTATION NO. 8

Student fees charged by a two-year college or regional campus are as low as possible, especially if the institution is supported by a local tax levy.

INDICATOR

A. Fees in context of institutional mission, costs, local tax support and state support.

1. What are the total charges per full-time student, including tuition, general fees and special fees for a 15 quarter hour or equivalent load?
2. What is the annual local tax, if any, collected per student FTE?
3. What is your total cost per FTE (total expenditures, not including grants, capital improvements, or private contributions divided by total FTEs) for the budget year most recently completed?
4. What percentage of your total costs per FTE are covered by state subsidy for the budget year most recently completed?

EXPECTATION NO. 9

Community involvement in the decision making process in such critical areas as course delivery, range of services, fees and budgets and administrative personnel.

INDICATORS

- A. A decision-making process in place that is responsive to community/service area concerns.
 - 1. What groups (minorities, business, professional, ect.) are represented on your governing and advisory boards?
 - 2. What advocates and actions are undertaken by your governing and advisory boards to assess community needs?
 - 3. What is the process by which governing or advisory boards assess your responsiveness to community/ service area priorities?
- B. Processes in place to improve continuously community/ service area involvement in the life of the two-year colleges and regional campuses.
 - 1. What process is in place to assess and improve community/ service area involvement in the life of your institution?
 - 2. In what ways has community involvement, other than the use of advisory or governing boards, been utilized to effect decisions on campus in such areas as course delivery, range of services, fees and budgets and administrative personnel?

C. GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT PLAN

The General Education Competencies

Owens Community College has always supported the idea of "whole person" student development. Thus, students' general education academic achievement is as important as their technical education academic achievement. In keeping with this belief, the Outcomes Assessment Task force decided that it was essential to assess those general education outcomes that were deemed important for all Owens Community College students. The first step was to establish the General Education Outcomes. In eight meetings in late March, the Task force solicited input from faculty, staff, and administration. The result of this input was the accompanying list of General Education Competencies (See Appendix B), or general education outcomes, that all students should have achieved by graduation. In addition, the participants believed that a secondary list of General Education Competencies (Appendix C) may be important to specific departments; thus, departments were given the freedom to add these outcomes to their lists if they believe these secondary outcomes to be crucial for their students to have achieved.

Next, recognizing that these competencies must be assessed, the Outcomes Assessment Task force met on May 6 and 17, 1993, to brainstorm current and proposed measures for these outcomes (see Table 3). Some of the measures, or indicators, need no definition (ex. student success rates in courses and student usage rates in labs). The faculty survey, however, since it is a new proposal, may need further explanation. The suggestion was made that every three years, the Institutional Research Office would distribute a survey to the instructional personnel similar to the one distributed to them for the 1990 NCA Self Study. Faculty would be asked to comment on such matters as students' reading, writing, mathematical, and computer competency, oral communications ability, ethical behavior, etc. The results of this survey would be used for institutional and curricular improvement in Technical and Arts & Sciences Divisions.

For details concerning the indicators of the General Education Competencies, the population to be assessed, the timeline for assessment administration, the assessment administrator, the data analysts, and the area to whom this data is communicated, see Table 4. The institutional assessments for some of these competencies have been detailed in Table 2.

TABLE 3
GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES

Competency	Outcome (s)	Source of Data	Indicators
Computer Skills	Do students have a basic working knowledge of the operation and application of personal computers?	GST 101 enrollment EGS 115/131 enrollment Computer lab	Student success rate Number of passing students Faculty satisfaction survey w/student computer facility Employer satisfaction survey CCL rate of use
Reading	Can students read and comprehend at minimal 9th grade level?	Computer software programs ENG 105 enrollment Reading lab	ASSET scores Faculty survey CAAP scores ENG 105 student success rate
Mathematics	Can students perform basic computational skills (through Algebra I level)?	MTH 100/105 enrollment Math lab	ASSET scores Faculty survey CAAP scores MTH 100,/105 student success rate
Writing	Can students write a well organized, well developed essay essentially free from sentence boundary errors?	ENG100/101/111 enrollments Writing lab/center Number of courses adopting writing-Across-the-curriculum Approaches Student Portfolios	ASSET scores Faculty survey ENG 100/101/111 success rates Writing lab/center rate of use

Competency	Outcome (s)	Source of Data	Indicators
Oral Communications	Can students orally express their ideas clearly and with confidence? Can students give a well organized, prepared oral presentation with confidence?	SPE 101/210 enrollments Course embedded oral presentations	SPE 101/210 success rates Evaluations—faculty employees
Library Skills	Do students know how to identify and locate appropriate library resources? Do students have the ability to use library resources for research?	ENG 111 library unit ENG 112 enrollment Course embedded research assignments	ENG 111/112 success rates Evaluation from faculty Input from transfer colleges/universities
Critical Thinking	Can students demonstrate an ability to think critically (i.e. organizing, interpreting, synthesizing, and evaluating ideas).	General Education curriculum enrollment Technical course enrollment	Success rates in courses that incorporate problem solving skills. Faculty survey Employer survey
Ethics	Do students demonstrate knowledge of professional standards and practices in their technologies?	Components of technical and General Education courses that address codes of ethics and ethical practices.	Employer feedback Faculty feedback Course success rates

Competency	Outcome (s)	Source of Data	Indicators
Awareness of Diversity	Do students demonstrate a knowledge of cultural, intellectual, and gender diversities as they affect social and work-place relationships?	General Education curriculum. Components of Technical courses dealing with professional standards/practices	Faculty/employer/ community feedback

TABLE 4

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES*

Indicator	Population	Timeline	Who Initiates/ Administers	Who Provides Analysis	Who Receives Results
Student Success Rate in Computer Courses	Students in GST 101, EGS 115, EGS 131	Annually	Chair, Office Administration	Chair, Office Administration	College Community
Faculty Survey	Full and Part time Faculty	Every three years	Institutional Research	Institutional Research	Instructional Community
Usage Rates for Reading, Writing, Math, and Computer Labs	Students Using the Labs	Annually	Lab Coordinators	Lab Coordinators	Department Chairs and Faculty
Success Rates in Developmental Courses	Developmental Education Students	Annually	Institutional Research	Institutional Research	General Education Dean, Chairs, Faculty, and Counseling Staff
Success Rates in Sequential Courses	Former Developmental Education Students in Basic Skills General Education Classes	Annually	Institutional Research	Institutional Research	General Education Dean, Chairs, Faculty, and Counseling Staff

*The institutional assessments for the General Education Competencies (ASSET, CAAP, Transfer Survey, Employer Satisfaction Survey, and Student Satisfaction Survey) are detailed in Table II.

D. PROGRAM SPECIFIC ASSESSMENTS

Each technical major at Owens Community College is charged with the responsibility to develop its own assessment plan and methodology. The assessment workbook, while not required in its specific format, is available to assist faculty and chairmen with the opportunity for the self-inspection provided by assessment activity. The timelines for the development of initial assessment plans by the department chairmen are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5
DEPARTMENTAL ASSESSMENT PLANNING

DEPARTMENT	CHAIRMAN	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Math/ Science	Rick Furfure	X		
Optometric/ Ophthalmic	Barb Hetrick	X		
Radiologic Technologies	Linda Myers	X		
Dental Hygiene	Trudy Palmer	X		
Quality Engineering	George MacRitchie	X		
Diesel Technology	Bob Williams	X		
Communications/ Humanities	Shelby Pierce	X		
Center for Dev. & Training	Laurie Wimmer	X		
Counseling	Lindsey Whitehead	X		
Applied Industrial Tech.	Bob Chizek	X		
Behavioral Sciences	Jarvis Gamble		X	
Law Enforcement Tech.	Larry Armstrong		X	
Early Childhood Dev.			X	
Automotive Technology	Roy Marks		X	
Registered Nursing & Surg.	Elizabeth Ream		X	
Dietetic Technology	Marti Johnson		X	
Office/ Computer Tech.			X	
Developmental Education				X
Physical Therapist Assistant				X
Electrical/ Electronics	Chuck Skinn			X
Mechanical Engineering Tech.	Dave Wagner			X
Marketing/ Management Tech.				X

Workbook



OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT WORKBOOK

DEVELOPING AN OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN: AN INTRODUCTION

This workbook was designed to help you formulate an outcomes assessment plan. It should be used as a means for guiding your thinking as you begin to write your outcomes assessment plan during the next academic year and beyond. This workbook consists of six parts that you will be asked to complete. These parts, once completed, should culminate in an outcomes assessment plan for your program area or department.

- ❑ First, review the mission and purpose statements for Owens Community College and how the five distinct community college functions are embedded in our purpose statements.
- ❑ Second, write mission and purpose statements for your division and department or program. If your division, department, and/or program already have mission and purpose statements, then you may move on to Step Three.
- ❑ Third, write department student outcomes statements and assessment techniques. During this process you will match your departmental mission and purposes statements to more specific student outcomes as well as to methodologies or techniques designed to assess the student outcomes. (See Figure 1, page 50)
- ❑ Fourth, complete the departmental assessment planning form. During this process you will give specific directions for the assessment process by defining what population or sample of students will be assessed, when, by whom, at what cost, and using what types of assessment instrument or technique. The reporting process for the results will also be defined, and this will include the distribution and use of the results.
- ❑ Fifth, once the assessment has been completed you must demonstrate how the results will be used for improvement of the teaching/learning process. You must report the results obtained, analysis of the results, and action plans or steps which may be taken as a result of the analysis. Action plans from this step will need to be included in your operational planning document (from the institutional effectiveness model).
- ❑ Sixth, describe how you will use the results of your assessments. Describe how use of the results has led to program improvement.
- ❑ Seventh, describe when and how you will assess the overall assessment plan that you have just completed. Systematically, or periodically, your division and department should review and assess their plan.

STEP ONE:
BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE
COLLEGE MISSION AND PURPOSE STATEMENTS AND WITH THE
FIVE BASIC FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

STATEMENT OF MISSION AND PURPOSE

The mission of Owens Community College is to provide quality technical education that meets the needs of its students and the employers in its service area. The college is committed to preparing every graduate to succeed in the world of technical service, to make a positive contribution to society, and to support change as well as survive change.

The purposes for the college which enable it to fulfill its mission are identified as follows:

1. To offer the two-year associate degree in applied science, business, and technical studies, short-term and one-year certificates, and continuing education. The college has an obligation to provide current and relevant programs which reflect the requirements of employers and promote economic development in the college's service area.
2. To facilitate access to the college for every student interested in learning. This includes effective assessment of academic skills and appropriate placement in courses.
3. To provide an environment conducive to learning for a diverse population and the services needed by students to succeed in their academic programs. To this end, students are provided accurate information on the college's policies and expectations as well as student and academic services. Student services include initial information for a smooth transition to the educational setting, financial assistance, counseling, extracurricular activities, and employment referral services. Academic services include academic advising, library and learning resource services, and individualized academic support.
4. To provide developmental education in order to improve the students' potential for success in achieving their educational and career goals.
5. To provide quality technical programs which include a solid foundation in basic, ethical, and technical principles and the application of these principles to current technology and the world of work. General education supports the technical education courses, develops skills in critical thinking and problem-solving, and enhances the student's potential for the personal and cultural enrichment necessary for creative participation in life's activities and as a citizen of a free society.
6. To ensure that the training and education provided is responsive to the employment needs of its service community. The college supports new, revised, and innovative programs through coordination with the organizations, businesses, and industries throughout the service area. Advisory task forces, consisting of representatives with technical expertise, provide important insight and guidance in designing and reviewing relevant educational programs.

7. To articulate with universities and colleges in order to provide credit and program transfer for the college's graduates who seek additional higher education.
8. To seek appropriate accreditation of its programs by accrediting organizations in order to maintain a continuous outside review and thus ensure a quality education for its graduates.
9. To maintain high quality education at the lowest possible cost to the constituencies. To this end the college seeks public and private sources of support.

FIVE BASIC FUNCTIONS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

1. **TRANSFER** - The transfer function is perhaps the most traditional role of two-year colleges; it is the collegiate function that includes technical colleges among institutions of higher education. The transfer function is also the one function in which community colleges and four-year colleges and universities most clearly overlap.

(Owens Purpose Statements 5 and 7)

2. **CAREER PREPARATION** - Preparing students for new careers, career change, and career advancement has long been a cornerstone function of the technical college. This function—whether referred to as career, occupational, vocational, or technical education—provides a valued and needed service to individual students, to the community, and increasingly, to the nation struggling to compete effectively in the emerging global economy.

(Owens Purpose Statements 1, 5, 6, and 8)

3. **BASIC SKILLS AND DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION** - Expanding higher education opportunities to populations previously unserved was a founding principle of the technical college movement. This principle has been put into action by open-access admissions policies that have resulted in technical college student populations with diverse demographic characteristics, socio-economic backgrounds, educational objectives, and academic preparation and skills. As a result, technical colleges nationwide have developed a comprehensive range of precollege-level programs for students who are, at entry, underprepared for postsecondary study.

(Owens Purpose Statements 4, 5, and 8)

4. **CONTINUING EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY SERVICE** - The continuing education and community service function of technical colleges also has a controversial history. During the expansion of the 1960s and 1970s, technical colleges nationwide undertook to serve the expressed needs of their constituents and the communities in which they were located.

(Owens Purpose Statement 6)

5. **ACCESS** - Efforts to provide universal access to higher education were in large part responsible for the rapid expansion and development of the technical college. Established on the principle that people of all ages, of all races, of all stations in life, and in all geographic regions should have access to educational opportunity beyond high school, the public technical college has become the embodiment of democratic idealism in higher education in the United States.

(Owens Purpose Statements 2, 3, 8, and 9)

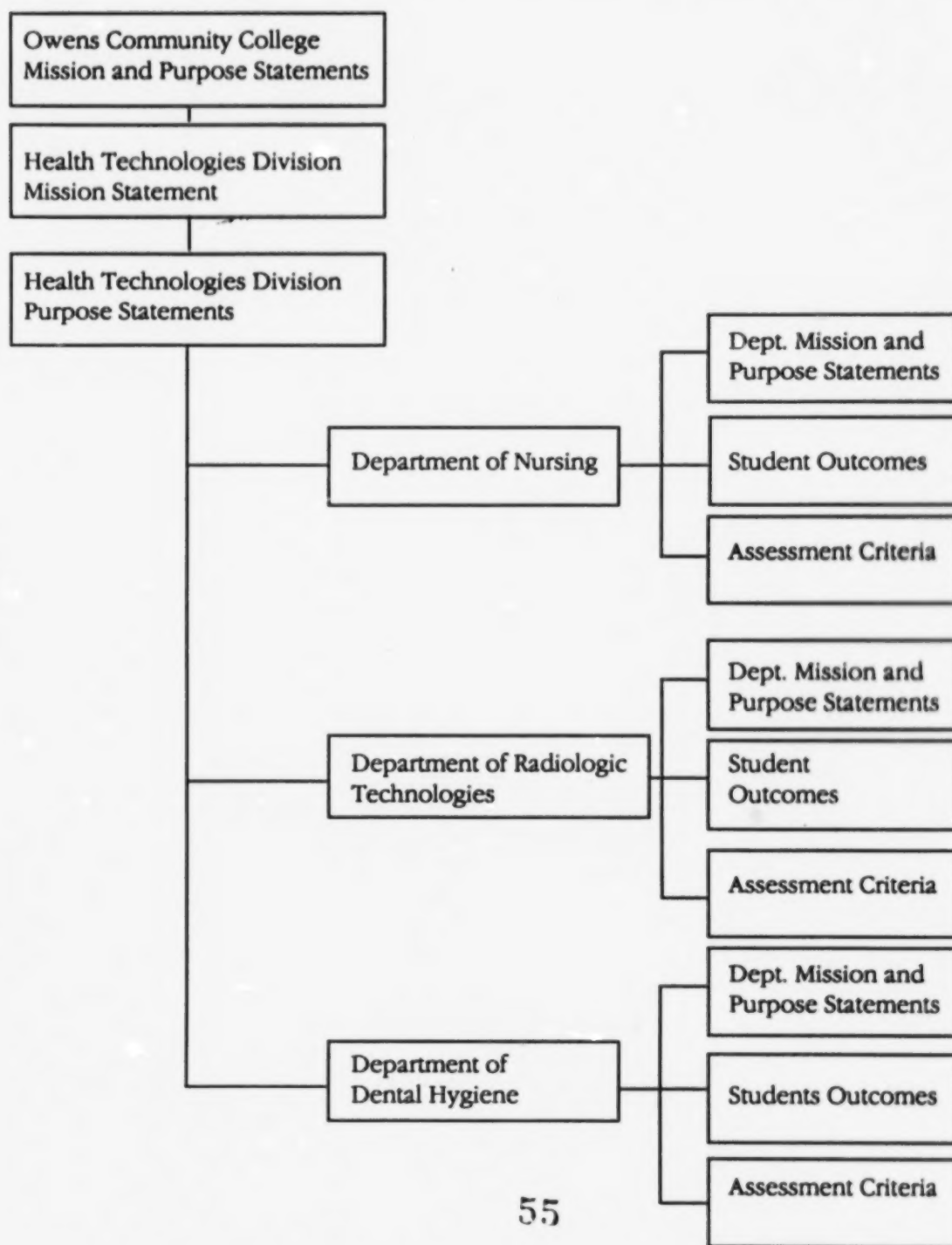
- From: *Assessing Institutional Effectiveness in Community Colleges*, League for Innovation in the Community College, D. Doucette and B. Hughes (Eds.), California, 1990.

STEP TWO

WRITE THE MISSION AND PURPOSE STATEMENTS FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT AND DIVISION

The mission and purpose statements for the department and division are normally written (at Owens Community College) during the Operational Planning Process. Operational planning is part of the Institutional Effectiveness process whereby departmental goals and objectives are written. It is logical to review department mission and purpose statements at this time, prior to writing student learning outcomes. An example of how college, division and department mission and purpose statements are woven into the fabric of the assessment process is illustrated in figure 1.

FIGURE 1
AN EXAMPLE MODEL FOR DEPARTMENTAL ASSESSMENT EFFORTS
SELECTED HEALTH TECHNOLOGIES



STEP THREE

WRITING DEPARTMENT STUDENT OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Definition:

A student outcome statement is a clear statement of measurable expectations for student academic achievement that results from the student's experience with your department. Essentially, you are defining what is important to you and your department regarding student learning. The only restriction imposed is that your outcome statements must be congruent with, or flow from, your department purpose statements. You should review your department mission and purpose statements and write at least one outcome statement that reflects (or is consistent with) a department purpose statement.

You may find that you want to write several outcome statements for one purpose statement and few outcome statements for another purpose statement. For example, the Department of Developmental Education may write more on the department and college's commitment to developmental education than on the college's commitment to the transferability of its courses.

Student outcome statements must include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor components. The cognitive domain includes the expected competencies (both breadth and depth of knowledge expected) and the expected skill outcomes (including basic, career related, and higher order skills). The affective domain includes the attitudes, values, and behaviors the student is expected to hold as a result of being a participant in your department. In the psychomotor domain, include those psychomotor skills or behaviors that you expect students to master.

Review your department or program purpose statement (s) and ask: "What are the specific student outcomes that we expect in our department or program?" "What is important to us?" Remember, statements should be written for the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Write your outcomes statements below. It may be helpful to first re-write your department or program mission and purpose statements, and then write your department outcome statements below them.

Program/Department Purpose Statements (re-written)	Program/Department Student Outcome Statements

(Continued) - Write your program/department student outcome statements below.

Program/Department Purpose Statements (Re-written)	Program/Department Student Outcome Statements

(Continued) - Write your program/department student outcome statements below.

Program/Department Purpose Statements (Re-written)	Program/Department Student Outcome Statements

STEP FOUR

HOW DO WE MEASURE OUR RESULTS?

The assessment of desired outcomes is a fundamental component to a good plan. During the assessment section, you must determine how you plan to demonstrate that the activities of your department do in fact lead to their intended outcomes. How do you know that it was your activities, and not some other influence, that led to the desired outcome? It is strongly encouraged that you assess the level of student outcomes using many different techniques with which you more familiar or comfortable. Both quantitative (using numbers, percentages, statistical tests, etc.) and qualitative (using descriptive, ethnographic, etc.) techniques are encouraged. In addition, you may ask such questions as:

1. What evaluation measures do we currently have in place?
2. Where do current measurements fit our plan?
3. Where will new forms of measurements be needed?
4. Are we using multiple measures of student academic achievement (i.e., both quantitative and qualitative measurement)?
5. Is assessment of our defined student outcomes an ongoing, systematic, and comprehensive endeavor?
6. What are the timelines for measurement?

Record how you plan to implement the assessment process by completing the Department Assessment Planning Form on the following page. These pages are blank templates that may be reproduced and completed for each different assessment technique utilized in your department. The planning form will help you "think through" the implementation process to ensure the timely and realistic accomplishment of your plan.

DEPARTMENT ASSESSMENT PLANNING FORM

Division: _____

Department: _____

Chairperson: _____

Assessment Technique: _____

Type of
Outcome Assessed: _____ Cognitive _____ Affective _____ Psychomotor

Student population (Will you assess all students or a sample of students?):

Timelines (When will the assessment be given?) _____

Who will administer the assessment? _____

Stage of Assessment: * _____ Upon Entry _____ Formative _____ Summative

* Remember that your assessment efforts should be motivated by one central goal: to improve student learning. Therefore, assessments should not occur only after students have experienced all that you have to offer in your department (summative types of assessments). In addition, assessment activities that measure student skill levels upon entry to the college, or to your department, as well as during the educational experience (formative) are important assessments to record. The matrix on the following page may be used as a guide to monitor your assessment activity.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Assessment Activity	FREQUENCY					Who Administers?
	Upon Entry	With 15 Hrs. Completed	With 30 Hrs. Completed	With 45 Hrs. Completed	Upon Program Completion	

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Assessment results should be prepared in a format that is clear and understandable for students, staff, and the general public. While primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning, the process also provides an accountability measure of department activity to the constituents that support departmental activity.

How will the data be analyzed? _____

How will the data be interpreted? _____

In what format will the results be presented and to whom/when will they be presented?

Who will provide the analysis and interpretation of the data and the presentation of the results?

Assessment costs:

STEP FIVE

HOW ARE RESULTS LINKED TO DEPARTMENT IMPROVEMENTS?

Assessment results are to be used for departmental self-examination that result in the improvement of student learning. Continuous improvement is the primary purpose of the assessment process; therefore, assessment results should provide foundation data that, coupled with other departmental data, can be used to set departmental goals and objectives. Planning should not be based solely upon anecdotal, political, or personal preferences without the inclusion of hard data derived from a reliable and valid assessment design.

Results:

(Briefly summarize the results of the assessment)

Conclusions:

(What conclusions can you draw about the teaching/learning process?)

Recommendations:

(What new departmental goals and objectives might be formulated to improve the teaching/learning process?) The recommendations made in this step should be included in your departmental operational planning process.

PART IV.

**Institutional Effectiveness
Model**



INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PROCESS

The institutional effectiveness process integrates the components of strategic and operational planning, academic and support services departmental review and evaluation, program outcomes assessment, market planning, and budget development into a system which leads to institutional improvement and accountability.

Integration is ensured through the use of interdependent elements within each activity. In addition, each element is organized sequentially to ensure the definition of broad parameters for institutional goals, collection of factual information about various aspects of the College, synthesis of factual information into a working plan, charting of future courses of action, and matching of fiscal and human resources to institutional needs and plans. It is a dynamic process which includes systematic evaluation of each component in the process.

Strategic planning has been an evolutionary process. The institutional effectiveness process presented within this document represents the next logical step in the maturation of strategic planning at Owens College.

The Process

Institutional effectiveness is a fluid process which relies upon a proactive administration, faculty, and staff willing to challenge or reconsider existing paradigms. The length of the cycles may fluctuate based upon the data that enters the system at various points throughout the process. Generally, a two to three year review cycle will be necessary to assure relevant strategic initiatives. (A flowchart of the process is attached.)

The entire process is driven by institutional mission and purpose. In fact, institutional mission and purpose provides the vision for all aspects of the institutional effectiveness process. The mission and purpose describes why the College exists or what functions it provides to its community and the audience it serves, what the internal constituency believes, and how the College fulfills its functions.

The mission and purpose is verified by an assessment of the College's environment. This assessment is undertaken through a review of institutional scanning and environmental scanning. The data gathered from the review of institutional scanning (strengths and weaknesses) and environmental scanning (opportunities and threats) is used to develop emerging issues which are synthesized to provide a comprehensive "snapshot" of the institution's health as well as a futuristic scenario of the environment that the institution will likely operate within.

Institutional strategic initiatives are formulated based on the synthesized information from the emerging issues phase. These broad initiatives provide substantial direction and boundaries for all entities within the institution to utilize in the operational planning phase of the institutional effectiveness process. The initiatives further develop the College's commitment and collectively represents the individual beliefs of the College community. These initiatives are published in a "strategic plan" document which is distributed to the entire College community.

The strategic plan provides the focus for academic program review and evaluation and college support services departmental review and evaluation. The academic areas will review and evaluate key aspects of their programs to identify strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, all academic areas will assess their stated program and student learning outcomes and determine where strengths and weaknesses exist. Support service areas will conduct a thorough review and evaluate key aspects of their departmental operations to identify strengths and weaknesses. Data gathered through these processes will be used as resource data in the operational planning phase.

During operational planning, academic areas and support service departments will develop mission/purpose statements, goals, and objectives. Data gathered in the College mission and purpose, strategic initiatives, outcomes assessment (for academic areas) and program/departmental review and evaluation phases will be used as resource information for the development of the entire operational plan.

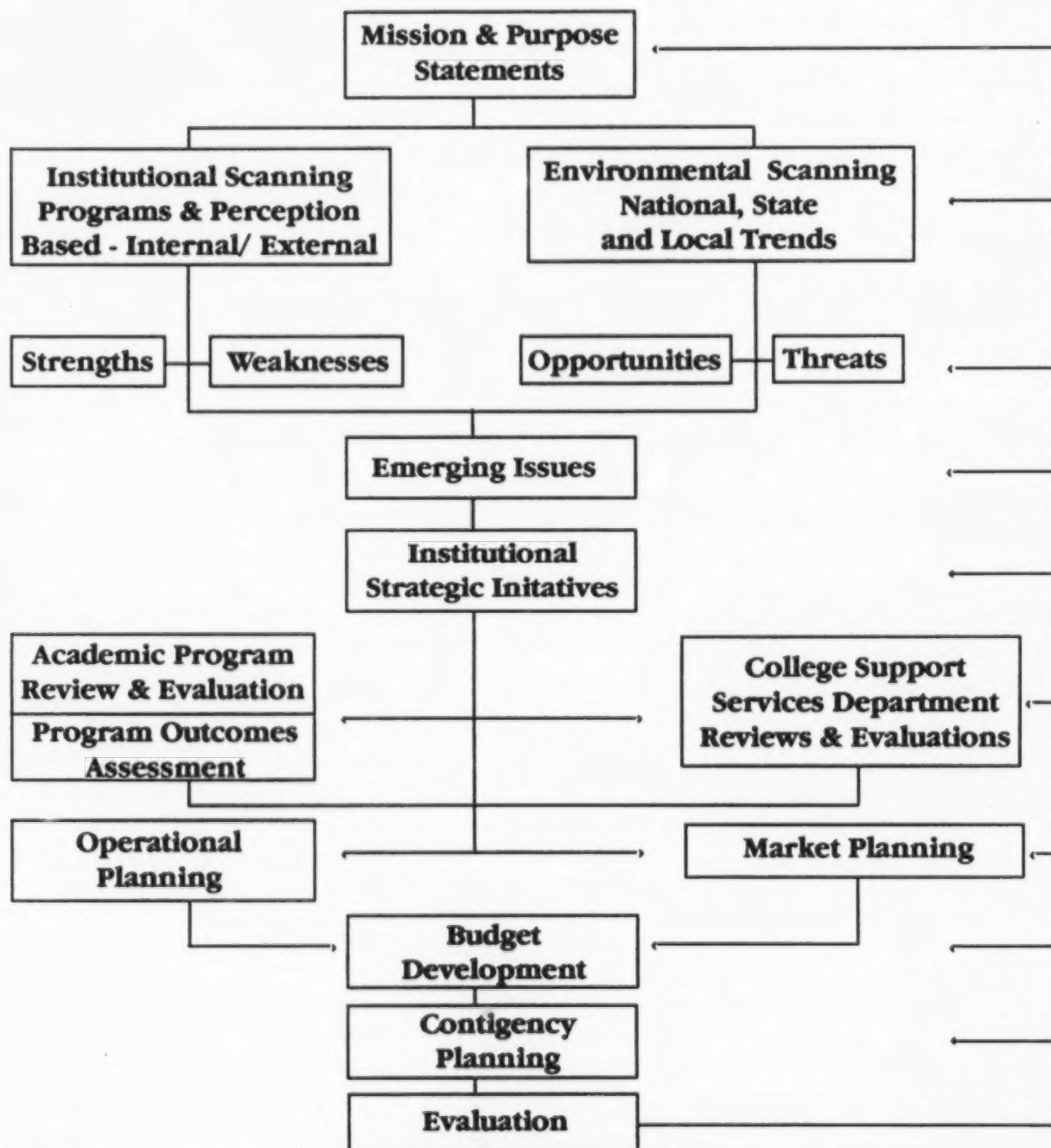
Concurrent with operational planning is market planning. Market planning assesses academic and support service against program/service promotion, program development, pricing and place of program offering. Coupled with operational planning, market planning drives the budget development process.

During budget development, academic and support service resource needs are compiled. All fiscal needs must flow from the operational and market planning phases. Fiscal needs are reviewed, prioritized and adjusted as necessary.

Between planning cycles, contingency planning allows for modifications and changes to be made to the strategic, operational, and market planning documents.

Every three to five years, each phase of the institutional effectiveness process is evaluated.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS PROCESS (FLOWCHART)



PART V.

Executive Summary



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The plan to document student academic achievement at Owens Community College begins and ends with the college mission and purpose statements. A hallmark of the plan is the way the mission and purpose of the college provides direction for each division and for each department, wherein expected student outcomes are stated and ultimately measured. Faculty and staff in each department develop their own statements of student academic achievement (what they believe to be important), their own assessment techniques, and their own evaluation of their plan. Each department will develop an assessment plan that is distinct and unique to the department, the sole purpose of which is to document the extent to which students achieve the level of academic performance that is expected.

The data obtained through assessment results are included in the department operational planning process where initiatives to improve the instructional process will be determined. In operational planning, department staff write their goals and objectives. Both the department outcomes assessment plans and operational plans are elements of the institutional effectiveness process that was described on pages 62-64. It is through the institutional effectiveness process that Owens Community College demonstrates how assessment programs lead to institutional improvement.

The Owens Community College assessment plan has evolved from its initial inception during the Fall Semester, 1992. Discussions of the plan have involved virtually all employees of the college, and their input has added to the plan a concern for the psychomotor domain, the separation of the general education component, the inclusion of a departmental workbook, changes in the timelines for implementation, and the decision that plan administration should be within each department. Finally, input from the Ohio Board of Regents contributed to the inclusion of the 9 service standards for community colleges in Ohio.

The ultimate intention of our outcomes assessment plan is to underscore our long-term emphasis on improving the teaching and learning process. We want Owens Community College faculty to understand and practice different styles of teaching as well as they understand and practice their own particular discipline. The outcomes assessment task force would like to see every faculty member at Owens Community College become a "Master Teacher," using information and making decisions about teaching that will lead to optimal learning for students.

APPENDIX A

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
OWENS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Appendix A, the Organizational Chart for Owens Community College, was not available at the time of printing and is not included here.

APPENDIX B

GENERAL EDUCATION COMPETENCIES FOR ALL STUDENTS

Basic Academic Skills

Computer Skills - Basic Knowledge and Applications
Reading - Speed and Comprehension
Mathematics - Practical and Applied
Writing
Oral Communications
Library Skills

Critical Thinking

Logic
Analysis
Synthesis
Problem Solving

Ethics

Knowledge and Application of Professional Standards and Practices

Awareness of Cultural, Intellectual, and Gender Diversity

APPENDIX C

COMPETENCIES DESIRABLE FOR STUDENTS

The competencies listed below are desirable for students from the point of view of individual departments and divisions - and to a greater or lesser extent - depending on students' career paths. Individual departments will decide on whether to include and assess these general competencies in their programs.

Social Skills

- Interpersonal Communications - People Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Ability to Work in Groups

Basic Life Skills

- Time Management
- Etiquette/Common Courtesy/Grooming
- Job Search Skills
- Career Decision and Planning Skills
- Citizenship Responsibility
- Planning Skills
- Listening Skills

Personal Growth and Development

- Self Esteem/Confidence
- Work Ethic
- Accountability/Responsibility
- Attitude - Professional
- Personal Development
- Independence

Environmental Awareness

Awareness of Career Paths

- Ability to Survive Change
- Importance of Continuing Education
- Career Exploration
- Knowledge of Professional Organizations